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SUBJECT: POPE REMEMBERS THE HOLOCAUST, WARNS AGAINST DENIAL

REF: A. A. Vatican 10
[1](#)B. B. Vatican 11

1 (U) During his January 28 general audience, on the day after UN International Holocaust Memorial Day (January 27) , Pope Benedict XVI stated publicly to an audience of thousands that:

Begin quote (post unofficial translation):

In these days when we remember the Holocaust, I turn to the memory of the images of my repeated visits to Auschwitz, one of the camps in which was consummated the savage slaughter of millions of Jews, innocent victims of blind racial and religious hatred. While affectionately renewing the expression of my full and unquestionable solidarity with our brothers, the recipients of the First Alliance, I hope that the memory of the Holocaust leads humanity to reflect on the unpredictable power of evil when it conquers the hearts of man. The Holocaust is a warning to all against oblivion, against denial or reductionism, because the violence done against a single human being is violence against all. No man is an island, wrote a famous poet. Above all, the Holocaust teaches both old and new generations that only the arduous journey of listening and dialogue, love and forgiveness leads the peoples, cultures and religions of the world to address the hoped for goal of brotherhood and peace in truth. May violence never again humiliate the dignity of man!.
End quote

[1](#)2. (SBU) Comment: The Pope's strong statement about the Holocaust would have been natural enough to commemorate the UN Holocaust Memorial Day. In the context of the current controversy in Vatican-Jewish relations (reftels), his words also respond to critics who accuse the Holy See -- or the Pope himself -- of insensitivity, anti-Semitism or even sympathy for Holocaust deniers. Whether these remarks will be enough to satisfy those who have called for a public apology from the Pontiff remains to be seen. Critics should not, however, expect the Pope to undo the decision to reinstate the group of bishops that included the Holocaust denier. End Comment.

NOYES